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## Florida House of Representatives Passes Measure to Establish State University Standards for Research Excellence and National Preeminence

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – In an effort to move Florida's state university system forward and establish a system of standards to promote global competitiveness, the Florida House of Representatives approved House Bill 7129, sponsored by House Education Committee Chairman Bill Proctor (R-St. Augustine), that will offer qualifying universities the flexibility to set tuition at differentiated and market rates.

"The Florida House has heard the ideas and suggestions of our leaders in higher education loud and clear: they are striving to become competitive with our nation's top universities and require more flexibility to take them there," said House Speaker Dean Cannon (R-Winter Park). "I applaud the House for rejecting the status quo and embracing the desire to become globally competitive in the area of higher education."

"Florida is already a global destination for tourists, and through this bill, it can also become a global destination for top talent in university research and innovation," said Representative Proctor. "I am pleased the House has agreed to take the first step toward allowing Florida's public universities to achieve their research goals, hire outstanding instructors and develop world-class instructional programs that will distinguish our schools from their peers."

House Bill 7129 establishes a collaborative partnership between the Florida Board of Governors and the Legislature to elevate academic and research excellence and national preeminence of the highest-performing state research universities by creating a system of standards. If signed into law, universities that meet specified standards would be able to establish student tuition and fees at differentiated and market rates. Currently, Florida ranks 45<sup>th</sup> in the nation for tuition costs and remains one of the most affordable places to receive a degree in higher education.

Qualifying universities must meet at least 11 of the following 14 academic and research excellence standards to become state universities of national preeminence:

- An average weighted grade point average of 3.8 or higher on a 4.0 scale and an average SAT score of 1800 or higher for fall semester incoming freshman, as reported annually.
- A top 50 ranking on at least two well-known and highly respected national public university rankings, reflecting national preeminence, using most recent rankings.
- A freshman retention rate of 90 percent or higher for full-time first-time-in-college students, as reported annually to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

- A 6-year graduation rate of 70 percent or higher for full-time first-time-in-college students, as reported annually to the IPEDS.
- Six or more faculty members at the state university who are members of a national academy, as reported annually by the Center for Measuring University Performance in the Top American Research Universities (TARU) annual report.
- Total annual research expenditures, including federal research expenditures, of \$200 million or more, as reported annually by the TARU.
- Total annual research expenditures in diversified nonmedical sciences of \$100 million or more, based on data reported annually by the National Science Foundation (NSF).
- A top 100 public university national ranking for research expenditures in five or more science, technology, engineering, or mathematics fields of study, as reported annually by the NSF.
- One hundred or more total patents awarded for the most recent 3-year period, as reported annually by the US Patent and Trade Office.
- Two hundred fifty or more doctoral degrees awarded annually, as reported in the TARU annual report.
- Two hundred or more post-doctoral appointees annually, as reported in the TARU annual report.
- A national quality ranking higher than predicted based on available financial resources rankings, as reported annually by U.S. News and World Report.
- An endowment of \$400 million or more, as reported in the TARU annual report.
- Annual giving of \$50 million or more, as reported in the TARU annual report.